

[Mr. SMITH] expect to propose a resolution urging the FDA and the EPA to postpone action on this matter.

Mr. Speaker, 30 million people in the United States today rely on these medications and as each of us know, some better than others, these people use a product called a metered dose inhaler, which I will refer to as MDI, to deliver the medications they need into their lungs. Over the past 25 years, we have developed many new treatments for people with asthma, chronic pulmonary disease, and other airway diseases that prevent people from breathing. In fact, there are now 70 different products available in metered dose inhalers. For people who cannot breathe, these products are lifesavers and allow people to lead normal lives.

On March 6, 1997, the Food and Drug Administration surprisingly issued an advance notice of proposed rulemaking that sets in motion a process to take these medications away from patients. According to the FDA, this proposed rule was developed in collaboration with the Environmental Protection Agency because of EPA's desire to eliminate all uses of chlorofluorocarbons. These are what are called CFC's, which I will refer to them as.

CFC's are important in this picture because all metered dose inhalers, except one, use CFC's, a propellant that gets the medicine from the inhaler canister into the patients' lungs. Until recently, CFC's were the only propellant approved by the FDA to do so.

I am told the makers of metered dose inhalers believe that elimination of CFC's is a worthy goal. Therefore, that is why the United States and 140 other countries signed a treaty to phase out CFC's use. I believe this treaty did a good job establishing a process that allows companies that make products that use CFC's to develop alternatives and get these to the customers.

The treaty went for the big users of CFC's first. In the United States we no longer use CFC's in hair sprays, air fresheners, new cars containing air-conditioning systems, and new refrigerators. Some of us here in the House may question this altogether, but it is done.

The treaty, however, also acknowledged that some uses were more difficult to phase out. Asthma medicines were one of them. So why is the FDA now proposing action that would unnecessarily move up the time line provided in this international treaty? Why, when FDA's mission is to provide patients with safe and effective medicines, is it seeking to ban the safe and effective medicines from patients who require them?

Thousands of Americans fear this proposed policy. I am keenly aware of the fear my constituents have. A woman in Ocala, my hometown of Florida, said,

I understand there is an FDA proposal to withdraw certain inhaler medications. As an

asthmatic patient with a daughter and 3 grandchildren who are also asthmatic, I protest your proposal vehemently. The CFC and the metered dose inhalers have minimal impact on the environment, and any one of my family could suffer or die because of your phasing out the proposal. You will be responsible.

Another man from Ocala, FL, writes,

In September 1993, I was discharged from the hospital under the care of a hospice. I had been confined for almost a month with viral pneumonia and was being treated with a wide range of medications, including 16 liters a minute of oxygen. The pulmonary specialist who had attended me had given up hope and estimated that I could live for perhaps 2 weeks. Needless to say, they were wrong and I survived but my lungs are severely damaged. I have been using three different MDI medications ever since my 'recovery' and would not survive without them. Great strides have been made in elimination of these products in refrigeration systems and in various aerosol sprays but MDI products must be viewed in a totally different way. They are essential to the health of many persons as opposed to the other products which were used for comfort or convenience. Moreover, reasonable substitutes have been found for nonmedical products. This is not the case for MDI's. Potential substitutes must be subjected to the usual comprehensive scrutiny that the FDA applies to all medications. I cannot believe that the tiny amount of CFC's released by MDI's would produce a detectable level of CFC in the atmosphere between now and the time a medically safe substitute can be developed. I urge the FDA and the EPA to postpone action on elimination of CFC's from metered dose inhalers until such a medically safe substitute is found.

In conclusion, another woman from Ocala states,

My life depends on MDI's and I am never without three of them, and they all contain different medicines. I'm 69 years of age and I've used them most of my adult life and I cannot understand the big rush suddenly to ban the MDI's. It is frightening to think of the ban since my very life depends upon it.

Mr. Speaker, these are just a few of the 10,000 letters that the FDA has received. I hope my colleagues will sponsor my bill. We must halt the FDA's action, which is harmful to patients.

TRIBUTE TO THE LIFE OF CHARLES KURALT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 21, 1997, the gentleman from North Carolina [Mr. PRICE] is recognized during morning hour debates for 2 minutes.

Mr. PRICE of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, Charles Kuralt was an ambassador for North Carolina. With a crinkled road map and a two-man camera crew, he set out to see America. He was a wonderfully gifted storyteller and the story he told was ours. He wanted to showcase the very best of America, not the headlines or the lead stories in the news but the America of ordinary people living extraordinary lives. Charles Kuralt knew that many people report on the mayhem of the world, but he had a more important story to tell.

When Walter Cronkite stepped down from anchoring, Charles Kuralt had the opportunity to take the helm but he turned it down so he could continue to see America his way, traveling the forgotten State highways in his rambling RV, stopping in the small country stores to "sit a spell."

He gave a voice to every American. Interviewing the North Carolina woman who at 104 years old visited nursing homes each week to sing and to bring a smile to tired faces. Or the story of the poor southern family that worked to send all nine kids to college. Charles Kuralt believed these families and their stories were not only "small town" America, they were the very essence of America. We understand ourselves and each other better because of the work he did among us.

An ambassador for North Carolina who made us proud, Charles Kuralt is being honored at this moment at a memorial service at his alma mater, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. He was a North Carolinian who set out to understand America and today, after an incredible journey, he will come back home to rest beneath the magnolia trees in Chapel Hill.

LEGISLATION TO EASE IRS BURDEN ON ELECTION OFFICIALS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 21, 1997, the gentleman from Pennsylvania [Mr. GEKAS] is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. GEKAS. Mr. Speaker, it is not an overstatement to say that our system of free elections, which is the envy of the world and the envy of the history of civilization, depends a great deal on the volunteer election system that we have in manning and womaning the polls, our election workers who come from our neighborhoods and who help every single election day to put through a process which, as I say, is the envy of the world. Yet over the last several years we have found a subtle threat to these free elections. I say again I am not overstating it. What has happened is that the IRS has mandated that even these workers who only work once or twice a year, who most of the time are senior citizens who have long since retired and are only helping out in their precincts because they have been requested to and because they want to help out, they are being subjected to the same tax regulations as the high-earning citizens of our communities.

A long time ago the Congress took a step to try to help the situation, to say that if a person earns less than \$1,000 a

year, they would not have to file FICA, the Social Security mandated provisions. What my legislation does is to take it a step further and to say that those who are earning \$1,000 or less, and most of those people would be found in the category of these election workers, if they earn \$1,000 or less not only would they not have to comply with Social Security as is already the law, but now they would not have to file the W-4's in response to the W-2's and that the local election officials would not have to bother with that if they are reasonably certain that the people they are employing for these 1- or 2-day-a-year jobs would not be earning more than the \$1,000 that would qualify them for the Social Security in the first place.

This is a problem for every single Member of the House and of the Senate. The election workers are the people who make our system work. The less we bother them with details that are meaningless, the better off we are and the better off they are. They will be more easily recruited for these positions on the election precinct basis and we can be certain that the free elections of which we are so proud can be guaranteed.

So I am offering the legislation. I have the cosponsorship of the gentleman from Texas [Mr. FROST], who is well aware of the program that we are trying to inject into the system. Now I invite the cosponsorship of others. It is a simple in my judgment technical amendment to conform to another technical amendment that already is on the books that would exempt our senior citizen election officials from the FICA portions, now we want to exclude them from all the paperwork that has been so burdensome to them and to the county officials who have to implement the election laws.

INTRODUCTION OF INTERNATIONAL TOBACCO RESPONSIBILITY ACT OF 1997

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 21, 1997, the gentleman from Texas [Mr. DOGGETT] is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. DOGGETT. Mr. Speaker, this week I am introducing the International Tobacco Responsibility Act. To some, this title will itself appear contradictory, for clearly the tobacco lobby has never been known to accept responsibility for the death and disease that its products cause. But now, under the terms of the proposed tobacco settlement, American companies have agreed to impose more meaningful labeling and warning requirements on their products and on their advertisements. Under this settlement's terms, for the first time cigarette packs will carry warnings such as "Smoking Kills," which it obviously does; "Smoking is Addictive"; and "Smoking Causes Cancer, Heart Disease and

Emphysema." Yet while the settlement requires these warnings on tobacco sold here at home, it makes no effort to curb the export of death.

As noted in a recent front page article in the New York Times entitled "Fenced in at Home, Marlboro Man Looks Abroad":

If there is a heaven for beleaguered cigarette manufacturers of the West, it is the developing markets of eastern Europe, Asia and the Middle East, half a world away from . . . assertive regulators. . . .

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Indeed, in agreeing to settle the lawsuits brought against them here in America, the corporate nicotine dealers made sure that they retained full authority to promote a nicotine fix that hooks kids around the world with their deadly products, and they are doing that just as fast as they can.

Since 1990, Philip Morris, for example, has had its sales go up by 4.7 percent here in the United States but abroad, it has grown 80 percent. The world's children, the children are the newest target of Big Tobacco's continued addiction itself to making money at the expense of human lives. Joe Camel and the Marlboro cowboy, they have not gone away; they are just taking a trip overseas where they will appear on a billboard next to someone else's school and on the pages of a youth-oriented magazine in another language.

Big Tobacco knows that it can pay any penalties that we impose in America with profits earned at the expense of someone else's children. That is wrong. If America is to call itself a world leader, it must also lead in the battle to save the lives of young children from nicotine addiction, and that leadership means more than just saving lives in my home State of Texas or in Ohio; it means being concerned about the lives of young children in Poland or in Korea.

The tragic consequences of nicotine addiction do not know any national boundaries. Tobacco does not discriminate. It kills people regardless of race, creed, color or national origin, and American tobacco companies should have the responsibility to warn smokers everywhere across this world of the ghastly health effects of their products.

The International Tobacco Act of 1997 would take three important steps toward addressing this worldwide health menace.

First, it would require that American tobacco companies apply the same warning labels to their products sold overseas and their advertisements as they are required to do in the United States. While current United States law requires labels on domestic cigarette packs, it specifically exempts exported cigarettes. This bill would repeal that loophole and require labels on tobacco products produced here or wherever their ultimate destination.

Second, the International Tobacco Responsibility Act would prohibit the

existing subsidy, yes subsidy, by American taxpayers for promoting overseas tobacco sales. Too often in the past Federal officials in our own Government have been accomplices to exporting death and disease throughout the world. Employees of our Government, paid with our tax money, have promoted tobacco abroad and brought down advertising restrictions in other countries that were designed to prevent addicting children and others overseas from the very way that they have been exploited here at home.

Third, the International Tobacco Responsibility Act would call on the United States of America to exercise some moral leadership on this vital issue. If we can achieve an international accord to restrict the trade in ivory to protect elephant herds around the world, surely we can seek accords to restrict the marketing of lethal tobacco products to the world's children.

This bill would urge the President to seek, through the United Nations, an international conference to implement measures such as those in the proposed settlement agreement to reduce nicotine consumption worldwide. In Japan, one warning label modestly suggests "let us carefully observe smoking manners." Clearly it would be the ultimate hypocrisy to continue to promote death abroad at the same time we address the needs of our own children here at home.

As we move toward consideration of the proposed tobacco settlement, we must not default on our obligation as a world leader. We should seize this unique opportunity to act responsibly ourselves, while seeking concerted international action to limit trafficking in a highly addictive drug that kills more people worldwide than any other.

PRESERVE FUNDING FOR THE ARTS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PETRI). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 21, 1997, the gentleman from Massachusetts [Mr. MCGOVERN] is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, some of my colleagues have been arguing that the Federal Government should bear no responsibility for funding the arts. They claim that the National Endowment for the Arts is a shameful bureaucracy, out of touch with the American people; that it is a bastion of elitism; that Americans would be better off without it.

Mr. Speaker, those colleagues are wrong, and I rise today to set the record straight.

I was in my hometown of Worcester, MA, for the Fourth of July festivities. Before the fireworks took to the sky, I sat with 30,000 of my constituents as we were collectively awed by the Central Massachusetts Symphony Orchestra performance. It was a breathtaking experience. The concert was free to the